

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VALLET 00817 141336Z

47

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 007416

O 141252Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6890

S E C R E T VALLETTA 0817

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MT, US

SUBJ: MINTOFF MESSAGE TO THE SECRETARY

REF: VALLETTA 0792

1. GOM ATTORNEY GENERAL EDGAR MIZZI CONFIRMED THIS MORNING THAT MINTOFF HAS SENT A WRITTEN MESSAGE TO THE SECRETARY THAT HAD BEEN OR WAS BEING DELIVERED BY "PRIVATE MEANS." MIZZI DID NOT SHOW ME THE TEXT BUT DESCRIBED IT AS REITERATING MINTOFF'S WISH TO DISCUSS WITH THE SECRETARY THE FUTURE OF MALTA IN THE POST-1979 PERIOD. RECOGNIZING THAT TIME MAY NOT NOW PERMIT SUCH A MEETING BEFORE THE ELECTION, MINTOFF URGENTLY WANTED THE SECRETARY'S REACTION TO THE GOM "DRAFT PROPOSALS" ENCLOSED WITH THE MESSAGE.

2. THE THRUST OF THE DRAFT PROPOSALS, OF WHICH THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT ALSO HAS A COPY AND IS DISCUSSING WITH OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, IS THAT A GROUP OF EUROPEAN AND ARAB STATES WOULD UNDERTAKE TO GUARANTEE MALTA'S NEUTRALITY IN THE POST-1979 PERIOD, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME "UNDERTAKING TO INSURE THAT MALTA BECOMES VIABLE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE."

3. MINTOFF ADDS IN THE MESSAGE THAT UNLESS THERE IS A "FAVORABLE REACTION" FROM THE EUROPEANS (AND THE USG ATTITUDE WOULD, HE RECOGNIZED, PLAY A LARGE PART IN DETERMINING THEIR REACTION), HE WOULD BE UNABLE TO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 VALLET 00817 141336Z

PUT THE PROPOSALS BEFORE THE ELECTORATE IN THE COMING

CAMPAIGN. IN THAT EVENT, MINTOFF WOULD BE LEFT WITH THE ONLY PRESENT ALTERNATIVE, I.E. THE ONE OFFERED BY LIBYA OF A "MUTUAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

4. ON THE PREVIOUS DAY, JULY 13, FOREIGN SECRETARY ABELA ALSO CONFIRMED HIS "UNDERSTANDING" THAT A MESSAGE HAD BEEN SENT TO THE SECRETARY BUT ADMITTED THAT, " AS USUAL," HE HAD NOT BEEN PRIVY TO ITS CONTENTS. HE UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT MINTOFF WAS SOLICITING USG SUPPORT FOR "STEERING A COURSE OF NEUTRALITY IN PERFECT HARMONY WITH THE WEST." HE ADDED THAT FROM MINTOFF'S POINT OF VIEW, THIS QUESTION WOULD BE VIRTUALLY "THE ONLY ELECTORAL ISSUE" OF THE COMING CAMPAIGN.

5. COMMENT: BLACKMAIL IS A HARSH WORD, BUT IT SEEMS TO FIT IN THIS CASE. IF THE MESSAGE IS IN FACT ALONG THE LINES DESCRIBED BY MIZZI, IT IS ANOTHER REFLECTION OF MINTOFF'S GROWING ANXIETY OVER THE ELECTION. HE DESPERATELY WANTS TO SHOW THE ELECTORATE THAT MALTA'S FUTURE IS ASSURED AFTER THE BRITISH DEPART, AND THE TAUNTS OF THE NATIONALIST OPPOSITION THAT HE HAS BEEN UNABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS ARE BEGINNING TO STRIKE HOME.

6. MINTOFF APPARENTLY ASSUMES THAT WE AND OUR NATO ALLIES WILL BE TERRIFIED AT THE PROSPECT OF A MALTESE MUTUAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT WITH COL. QADHAFI. CERTAINLY THE ITALIANS ARE. THIS PROSPECT (AND QADHAFI MAY WELL HAVE MADE SUCH AN OFFER) MAY INDEED BE GRIM TO CONTEMPLATE. ON THE OTHER HAND, MINTOFF WOULD APPARENTLY HAVE US BELIEVE THAT THE MALTESE ELECTORATE WOULD WELCOME SUCH A DEVELOPMENT. OUR OWN VIEW IS THAT THIS IS EMPHATICALLY NOT THE CASE AND WOULD INSTEAD BADLY FRIGHTEN LARGE SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION. INDEED, THE RESULT OF MINTOFF'S GOING TO THE ELECTORATE WITH THE LIBYAN PROPOSAL COULD CONCEIVABLY THROW THE ELECTION TO THE NATIONALISTS. SMITH

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, NEUTRALISM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976VALLET00817
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760272-0286
From: VALLETTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760757/aaaabylp.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 VALLETTA 792
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 MAY 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <23 AUG 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINTOFF MESSAGE TO THE SECRETARY
TAGS: PFOR, PSDC, MT, US, (MINTOFF, DOMINIC)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006